

REMARKS:

Claim 31 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,914,597 in view of U.S. Patent 4,531,153. Claim 32 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,914,597 in view of U.S. Patent 4,531,153 and U.S. Patent 6,259,957. In response, claim 31 is hereby amended to include the limitation of claim 33, and claim 33 is canceled.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 33 and 34 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 31 as amended includes all the limitations of claim 33, and claim 34 is amended to depend from claim 31 rather than claim 33. Thus, claims 31 and 34 are believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-3, 5-29, 35-81, 86-90. and 95-143 have been allowed. Applicants believe that the stated reasons for allowance apply to some but not all of these claims, and that the claims to which the stated reasons do not apply are patentable for other reasons (e.g., reasons set forth in the response to the previous office action).

It is respectfully submitted that all uncanceled claims, as hereby amended, are in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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